I. OVERVIEW

Success in transportation and transportation planning is about making the connections, whether it's connecting from bike to bus or truck to rail; relating the travel choices we make with environmental consequences; ensuring that land-use and transportation planning go hand-in-hand, or more equitably linking our transportation financing mechanisms to those who benefit directly from use of the system. The 2008 RTP connects the SCAG Region to a future vision where innovative solutions address the daunting challenges we face today.

The 2008 RTP presents the transportation vision for this region through the year 2035 and provides a long-term investment framework for addressing the region's transportation and related challenges. The Plan is the culmination of a multi-year effort focusing on maintaining and improving the transportation system through a balanced approach that considers system preservation, system operation and management, improved coordination between land-use decisions and transportation investments, and strategic expansion of the system to accommodate future growth.

The SCAG Region is economically, culturally, and ethnically one of the most diverse metropolitan regions in the world. It has a complex transportation system that includes extensive roadway, transit (bus and rail), and freight rail networks, along with major intermodal, seaport, and airport facilities. Exhibit 1.1 shows the major transportation infrastructure in the SCAG Region. Highlights of our vision for our region and the regional transportation system in 2035, embodied in this document, may be summarized as follows:

- A well-maintained and managed roadway network free of potholes and other roadway hazards
- A transportation system where most of the gaps have been addressed
- A safe, secure, reliable, and equitable public transportation system
- A seamless public transportation system that provides efficient access to jobs, shopping, recreation, education, health care and other activities

- More travel choices in addition to solo driving and public transportation, such as improved access to non-motorized transportation
- More people living closer to job centers and transit corridors and hubs
- Improved air quality for all, and
- A vibrant economy supported by an efficient goods-movement system

The 2008 RTP, built on regional consensus, is flexible and recognizes the unique and complex nature of the region. The 2008 RTP is an update to the 2004 RTP, and it replaces the 2004 RTP in its entirety.

Leadership, Vision, Progress

Leadership, vision and progress are three main components of SCAG's Mission Statement that apply to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) development process. In demonstrating a commitment to leadership, the region identified seven goals that reflect a balanced approach to transportation planning and decision-making. In providing a vision, the SCAG Regional Council adopted

policies to guide the development of the RTP and identified transportation priorities for the region. Lastly and most importantly, in its commitment to demonstrate progress, SCAG continues to rely extensively on performance measurement as a means to identify the most beneficial investments for the region. Together, these elements contribute to a strong and focused RTP.

REGIONAL GOALS

The goals of the 2008 RTP have expanded from 2004 to encompass transportation security. These seven goals are in no particular order and demonstrate the need to balance many priorities in the most cost-effective manner.

TABLE 1.1 RTP GOALS

RTP Goals
• Maximize mobility and accessibility for all people and goods in the region
• Ensure travel safety and reliability for all people and goods in the region
• Preserve and ensure a sustainable regional transportation system
• Maximize the productivity of our transportation system
• Protect the environment, improve air quality and promote energy efficiency
• Encourage land use and growth patterns that complement our transportation investments
• Maximize the security of the regional transportation system through improved system monitoring, rapid recovery planning, and coordination with other security agencies

These priorities are identified in the following:

- The region's vast investments in multi-modal transportation infrastructure must be protected. This infrastructure is maturing and requires attention and maintenance. The region cannot afford to replace the existing infrastructure and must protect it for future generations.
- A maturing system dictates an increased operational focus that leverages technology to maximize the system's productivity. This same investment will also increase reliability by minimizing the variations of travel time due to incidents, weather, and other factors. The region cannot expand the transportation system significantly, so the existing system must be utilized to its fullest. The vitality of the region's economy is inextricably linked to efficient and reliable transportation. The region must be able to respond to and recover from major human-caused or natural events in order to minimize the threat and impact to lives, property, the transportation network and the regional economy.
- Air quality for the region's residents must be improved and meet federal regulations. Not doing so would undermine the health of our population and risk losing billions of federal funding to the region.
- The investments in the RTP must address travel safety and modal balance; recognize the importance of providing safe travel choices; meet the needs of the transit dependent and the goods movement community; and provide connections among the highway system, ports, and airports.
- The RTP must also integrate land-use policies as a means to influence transportation performance and the economy. Without such integration, transportation needs in the future will significantly outpace the ability to pay for them.
- The RTP must address all these priorities in the most cost-effective manner so that outcomes/benefits can be maximized and so that users get the most for their expenditures.

RTP GUIDING POLICIES

The SCAG Regional Council (RC) adopted five policies to guide the development of the RTP (Table 1.2). These RTP policies, unchanged since 2004, emphasize the importance of tracking the Plan's performance through specific indicators.

TABLE 1.2 RTP POLICIES

	RTP Policies
1	Transportation investments shall be based on SCAG's adopted Regional Performance Indicators.
2	Ensuring safety, adequate maintenance, and efficiency of operations on the existing multi-modal transportation system will be RTP priorities and will be balanced against the need for system expansion investments.
3	RTP land-use and growth strategies that differ from currently expected trends will require a collaborative implementation program that identifies required actions and policies by all affected agencies and subregions.
4	HOV gap closures that significantly increase transit and rideshare usage will be supported and encouraged, subject to Policy #1.
5	Progress monitoring on all aspects of the Plan, including timely implementation of projects, programs, and strategies, will be an important and integral component of the Plan.

PERFORMANCE-BASED PLAN

As with previous RTPs, this is an outcome/performance-based plan. The first RTP policy requires that performance measures play a critical role in the plan development. Performance measures quantify the outcomes that are important to individuals, businesses, and the region. They quantify regional goals and provide a way to evaluate progress over time. This is SCAG's fourth performance-based RTP. Starting in 1998, SCAG was the first Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to rely extensively on performance measurement as a means to identify the most effective investments for the region. The performance indicators for the 2008 RTP represent an evolution that builds on earlier successes and adds specificity and technical depth to the original indicators.

Assessing the degree to which the impacts of the 2008 RTP investments meet the regional goals requires complex technical analysis. Performance measurement is a critical part of this analysis, and is used for estimating the potential impacts of investments. The same measures will be used to monitor progress in meeting the performance expectations of the RTP. This monitoring will allow the region to correct its course over time as lessons are learned and new trends are established. Performance measures are closely tied to the broader goals to ensure that the implementation of this plan moves us closer to achieving these goals. Table 1.3 depicts the relationship between the RTP goals and performance measures while Table 1.4 describes the performance measures in greater detail.

TABLE 1.3 RTP GOALS AND RELATED PERFORMANCE MEASURES

RTP Goals	Mobility	Accessibility	Reliability	Productivity	Safety	Sustainability	Preservation	Cost-Effectiveness	Environmental	Environmental Justice
Maximize mobility and accessibility for all people and goods in the region	✓	✓						✓		✓
Ensure travel safety and reliability for all people and goods in the region	✓		✓		✓					
Preserve and ensure a sustainable regional transportation system						✓	✓		✓	✓
Maximize the productivity of our transportation system	✓			✓						
Protect the environment, improve air quality and promote energy efficiency						✓			✓	✓
Encourage land use and growth patterns that complement our transportation investments and improves the cost-effectiveness of expenditures	✓	✓							✓	
Maximize the security of our transportation system through improved system monitoring, rapid recovery planning, and coordination with other security agencies*										

* SCAG does not yet have an agreed-upon security performance measure; therefore it is not included in this table.

EXHIBIT 1.1 SCAG REGION

Source: Southern California Association of Governments, ESRI StreetMap USA, Teleatlas

TABLE 1.4 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance Measure	Measure(s)	Definition	Performance Target	Calculation Data Sources
Mobility	Speed Delay	Speed – experienced by travelers regardless of mode Delay – excess travel time resulting from the difference between a reference speed and actual speed Delay per capita can be used as a supplemental measure to account for population growth impacts on delay.	Improvement over Base Year	Travel demand model outputs AM peak, PM peak, Off-peak, Daily Link speeds, travel times, trips
Accessibility	Percent PM peak period work trips within 45 minutes of home Distribution of work trip travel times		Improvement over Base Year	Travel demand model outputs • PM peak • OD travel times • OD person trips
Reliability	Percent variation in travel time	Day-to-day change in travel times experienced by travelers. Variability results from accidents, weather, road closures, system problems and other non-recurrent conditions.	Improvement over Base Year	Highways – PeMS Transit – National Transit Database or triennial audit reports
Productivity	Percent capacity utilized during peak conditions	Transportation infrastructure capacity and services provided. Roadway Capacity – vehicles per hour per lane by type of facility Transit Capacity – seating capacity by mode	Improvement over Base Year	Highways – PeMS Transit – National Transit Database or triennial audit reports
Safety	Accident rates	Measured in accidents per million vehicle miles by mode for: • Fatalities • Injuries • Property	"0" for all accident types and modes	Highways – freeway accident rates from Caltrans Transit – National Transit Database or triennial audit reports
Sustainability	Total cost per capita to sustain system performance at Base Year levels	Focus is on overall performance, including infrastructure condition. Preservation measure is a subset of sustainability.	Improvement over Base Year	Sub-regional submittals Regional population forecast
Preservation	Maintenance cost per capita to preserve system at Base Year conditions	Focus is on infrastructure condition. Subset of sustainability.	Improvement over Base Year	Sub-regional submittals Regional population forecast
Cost Effectiveness	Benefit to Cost (B/C) Ratio	Ratio of benefits of travel alternatives to the costs of travel including infrastructure, maintenance, travel time, environmental, accident, and vehicle operating costs. This can be used to evaluate impacts of mode split changes resulting from RTP investments.	Improvement over Base Year	Travel demand model outputs Revenue forecasts RTP project expenditures Other cost estimates
Environmental	Emissions generated by travel	Measured/forecast emissions include CO, NOX, PM2.5, PM10, SOX, and VOC. CO2 as secondary measure to reflect greenhouse gas emissions.	Meet SIP Emission Budgets & Transportation Conformity requirements	Travel demand model outputs EMFAC2007
Environmental Justice	Distribution of benefits and costs Accessibility Environmental Emissions Noise	Share of net benefits and costs by mode, household income, race/ethnicity: • RTP expenditures • Taxes paid (e.g., income, sales & use, gas) • Access to jobs (See "Accessibility") • Travel time savings by mode • Environmental impacts from PEIR	Equitable distribution of benefits and costs	Travel demand model outputs Revenue forecasts RTP project expenditures PEIR

WHY UPDATE THE RTP?

SCAG is the federally designated MPO for the counties of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura. As the MPO, SCAG develops the RTP and updates it every four years through a continuous, comprehensive and cooperative process. Transportation investments in the SCAG Region that receive state and federal funds or require federal approvals (such as environmental clearance) must be consistent with the RTP and must be included in SCAG's Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) when ready for funding. As the programming document for funds, the RTIP complements the corresponding years of the RTP. The RTIP is a six-year program and is coordinated with the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) every two years. Following are key reasons the RTP should be updated.

REFLECT CURRENT CONDITIONS

As the economy, demographics, finances, and other factors change, SCAG has a responsibility to modify the RTP to reflect the latest information and conditions. Factors that have changed since the 2004 RTP was adopted include:

- New information on population and employment growth
- New or reauthorized transportation funding sources
- 2007 South Coast Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) and new motor vehicle emission budgets and emission factors
- Rapid increases in construction costs in the past four years, and
- Other shifts in regional priorities determined by SCAG and the county transportation commissions (CTCs)

COMPLY WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA: LU) was signed into law in August 2005, and expands upon previous planning requirements. The federal requirements for metropolitan transportation plans include the following key provisions:

- An open, inclusive process that ensures public input and considers the needs of those traditionally underserved by the existing system
- A plan horizon period of not less than 20 years into the future
- The most recent assumptions for population, travel and congestion, land use, vehicle fleet mix, employment and economic activity
- A financially constrained plan funded by revenues that are committed, available, or reasonably available over the time frame of the RTP
- Conformity to State Implementation Plans (SIPs) for air quality
- A discussion of potential environmental mitigation activities
- Consistency with state and local planned growth and economic development patterns, and
- Consideration of eight planning factors and strategies, in the local context, that address: economic vitality through global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency; safety; security; accessibility and mobility for people and freight; the environment, energy conservation, and the quality of life; integration and connectivity of the multi-modal transportation system; efficient system management and operation; and preservation of the existing transportation system.

COMPLY WITH STATE REQUIREMENTS

The state, whose requirements largely mirror the federal requirements, has adopted extensive RTP guidelines. Key state requirements include:

- Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- Consistency with the five-year STIP as incorporated into SCAG's six-year RTIP
- Program-level performance measures that include objective criteria that reflect the goals and objectives of the RTP, and
- A policy element (Chapter 1), an action element (Chapter 3) and a financial element (Chapter 4)

Our Approach

The development of the 2008 RTP is based on a collaborative and bottom-up process involving numerous parties. Each of the six counties in the SCAG Region has a transportation commission or authority, with the exception of Imperial County, where the Imperial Valley Association of Governments (IVAG) serves as the countywide transportation agency. These agencies are charged with implementing countywide transportation planning activities, allocating locally generated transportation revenues and, in some cases, operating transit services.

Additionally, there are 14 subregions within the SCAG Region. These subregional councils of governments (COGs) are groups of neighboring cities and communities (sometimes an entire county) that work together to identify, prioritize and seek transportation funding for needed investments in their respective areas.

The SCAG Region also includes all or part of thirteen air quality non-attainment or maintenance areas in five air basins. Federal law requires that transportation and air quality planning are coordinated in these non-attainment and maintenance areas. The SCAG Region further includes all of Caltrans Districts 7, 8 and 12, and the Imperial County portion of District 11. SCAG develops the RTP primarily in coordination and consultation with the county transportation commissions (CTCs), COGs, transit operators, Caltrans, air districts and other transportation stakeholders. Key stakeholders involved in the development and update of the RTP are identified in Table 1.5.

TABLE 1.5 STAKEHOLDERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2008 RTP

County Transportation Commissions/Agencies
Imperial
Los Angeles
Orange
Riverside
San Bernardino
Ventura
Subregional Councils of Governments (COGs)
Arroyo Verdugo Cities
Coachella Valley Association of Governments
Gateway Cities COG
Imperial Valley Association of Governments
Las Virgenes-Malibu-Conejo COG
City of Los Angeles
North Los Angeles County
Orange County COG
San Bernardino Associated Governments
San Gabriel Valley COG
South Bay Cities COG
Ventura County COG
Western Riverside County COG
Westside Cities COG
Local and County Governments
Other Operators and Implementing Agencies
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Airport Authorities
Port Authorities
Transit/Rail Operators
Transportation Corridor Agencies
Resource/Regulating Agencies
US Department of Transportation - FHWA, FTA, FAA, FRA
US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
CA Air Resources Board
CA Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA)
Air Districts
Tribal Governments (See Exhibit 1.2)

EXHIBIT 1.2 FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS IN THE SCAG REGION

Source: Southern California Association of Governments, ESRI StreetMap USA, Teleatlas

TECHNICAL APPROACH

The technical approach to the RTP update is depicted in Figure 1.1. The first step in the process, which was initiated over three years ago, starts with the review and update of the basic assumptions in the existing RTP, including the goals and objectives. It is important to validate the basic planning assumptions and to ensure that the goals and objectives still speak to the region's needs, challenges, and aspirations.

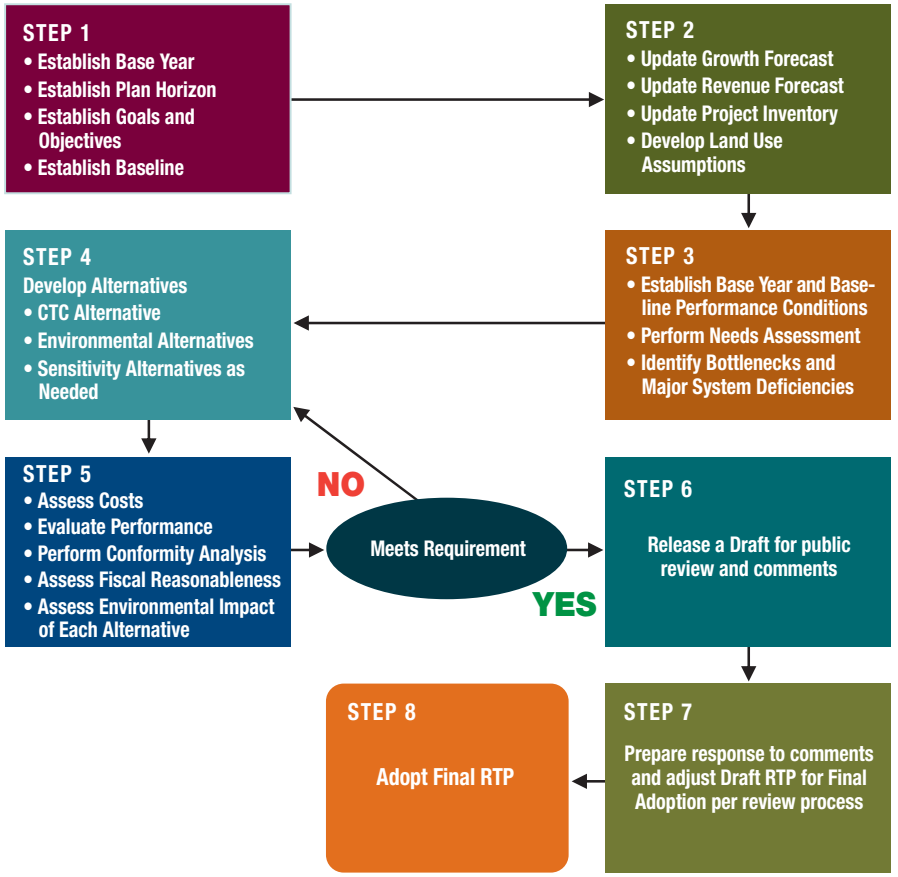
The second step is to ensure that all the data, including growth forecast, revenue forecast, cost information, project scope changes, etc., are updated. It is critical to involve key project sponsors, such as the CTCs, local jurisdictions, Caltrans, and transit operators during this step. Updating and validating the technical data and building the necessary consensus to move forward is a lengthy process.

The third step in the RTP development process involves taking the updated data and reassessing system deficiencies, bottlenecks, and chokepoints in the system to identify system improvement needs.

The fourth step targets improvements and strategies, including growth strategies, in developing alternative scenarios to be considered and tested against performance standards for potential inclusion in the updated Plan. Evaluation of the alternatives is based on a set of performance measures established through a consensus process. Additionally, fiscal reasonableness, transportation conformity and programmatic environmental impacts of the alternatives are also assessed. The best-performing alternative is forwarded as the preferred alternative recommendation to SCAG's policy board if it meets all of the requirements. If it fails to meet any of the requirements, the alternatives are adjusted and reevaluated until a preferred alternative meets all the requirements.

A Draft RTP that documents the preferred alternative as the Plan is then released for public review and comments for a minimum of 45 days. Finally, all comments received and appropriate staff responses are documented prior to finalizing the Plan. The Draft Plan is adjusted if and as needed to address the comments and issues raised during this period before recommending its final adoption as the new RTP for the region.

FIGURE 1.1 RTP UPDATE/DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A key component of the RTP development process is seeking public participation. Public input helps SCAG prioritize and address transportation needs in

the region. SCAG seeks participation and comment on the RTP from an array of stakeholders, listed in Table 1.6. The RTP is developed in consultation with all interested parties, and SCAG ensures that they have a reasonable opportunity to comment on the contents of the RTP.

TABLE 1.6 NON-GOVERNMENTAL GROUPS FROM WHICH SCAG SEEKS PARTICIPATION AND INPUT

Participatory Non-Governmental Groups
• Citizens
• Public transit users
• Pedestrians
• Users of bicycle transportation facilities
• Transportation agency employees
• Freight shippers
• Providers of freight transportation services
• Private providers of transportation
• Representatives of the disabled
• Non-profit organizations
• Ethnic and minority groups
• Older and retired persons
• Special interest nonprofit agencies
• Environmental groups
• Educational institutions
• Women's organizations
• Private sector

To ensure compliance with federal and state requirements, SCAG implements a public involvement process to provide complete information, timely public notice and full public access to key decisions, and to support early and continuing public involvement in developing its regional plans. Since its inception, SCAG has engaged in a public involvement process in developing its regional transportation plans and programs. As a result of changes in SAFETEA-LU in 2005, SCAG has broadened its current participation activities to engage a more extensive group of stakeholders in its planning and programming processes, as reflected in SCAG's Public Participation Plan adopted by the Regional Council in March 2007 and subsequently amended in October 2007. SCAG consulted with a range of interested parties as required by SAFETEA-LU in developing the public participation strategies, procedures and techniques noted herein. SCAG solicited comments and feedback from a diverse number of stakeholders through mailings, email correspondences, workshops, presentations, meetings, telephone communications and website postings.

By using the feedback and comments received on SCAG's Public Participation Plan, SCAG has implemented the following techniques and strategies for RTP outreach:

- Development of an Integrated Inter-Departmental Outreach Team that encourages innovative outreach efforts and is comprised of staff from various divisions, including Communications, Member Relations, and Transportation Planning
- Development of presentation materials for the public in a variety of formats to reach broader audiences: translated materials into languages other than English; developed interactive PowerPoint presentations, fact sheets, surveys, brochures, and maps
- Enhancement of website capabilities that allows SCAG to post all RTP-related information on its website to ensure that it is accessible and transparent to the public. The website is compliant with the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Coordination of outreach efforts with other stakeholder organizations to maximize outreach opportunities

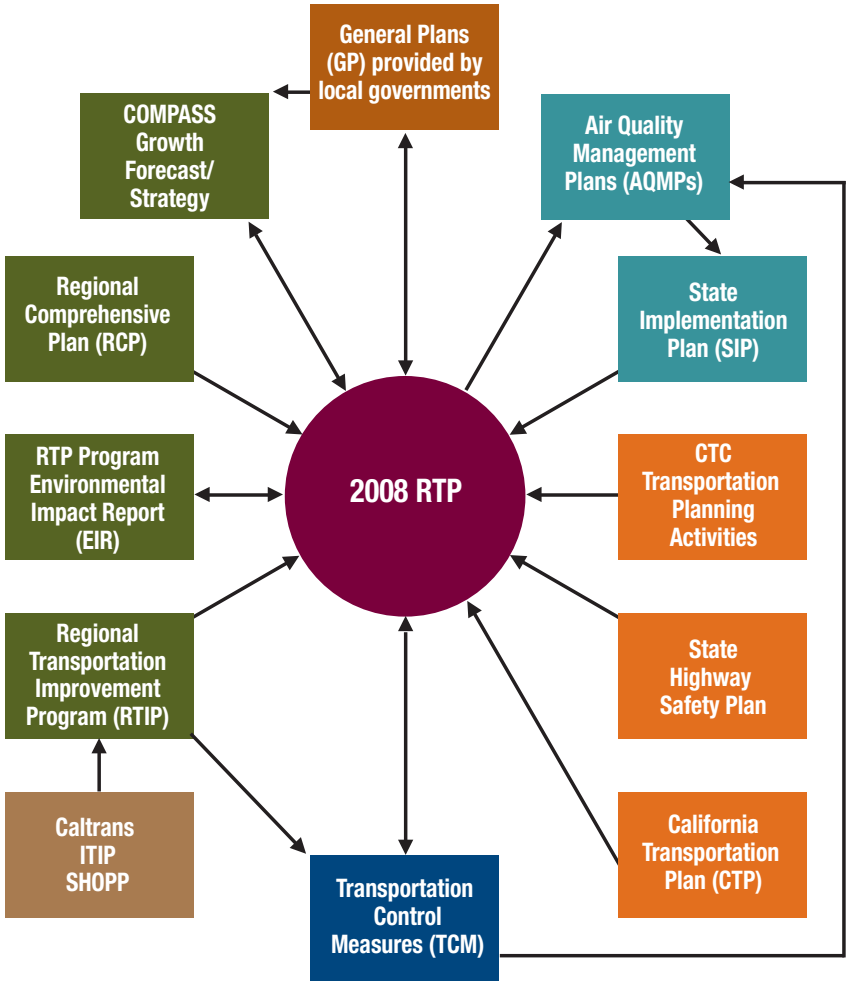
- Development of an outreach schedule that notifies all individuals and groups of activities where SCAG will be presenting the RTP and encourages attendance
- Supporting multiple committees and task forces involving our partners, stakeholders, and interested groups that developed the key components of the Plan
- Holding multiple public workshops before the release of the RTP to allow direct participation by interested parties
- Reaching out to traditionally underrepresented and/or underserved audiences
- Considering comments received in the deliberations regarding proposed plans and programs
- Evaluation of public participation activities to continually improve the outreach process

RTP outreach consists of three phases: Pre-Draft (February 2007 to November 2007), Post-Draft (December 2007 to February/March 2008), and Post-RTP adoption (March/April 2008 to July 2008). SCAG has developed an RTP hotline and email address exclusively for RTP inquiries at 213-236-1960 and RTPinfo@scag.ca.gov.

In addition to these targeted outreach efforts, all regular and special meetings of the RTP task forces, the Transportation and Communications Committee (TCC) and the SCAG RC are publicly noticed and opportunities for public comment are provided. There are currently seven RTP task forces and key transportation subcommittees: Goods Movement, Transportation Finance, High-Speed Regional Transport, Aviation, Plans & Programs Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Regional Transit Technical Advisory Committee, and the Compass Blueprint Partnership. Also, federally required interagency consultation is done through the monthly meetings of the Transportation Conformity Working Group (TCWG). Specific public comments on the RTP are being recorded and considered by SCAG in the development of the 2008 RTP.

RELATING OTHER PLANS AND PLANNING ACTIVITIES TO THE RTP

FIGURE 1.2 RELATIONSHIP OF PLANNING ACTIVITIES TO THE RTP



A number of SCAG planning activities directly impact the RTP development and update, as depicted in Figure 1.2. The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) is a vision of how the region can balance resource conservation, economic vitality, and quality of life. The RTP Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) fulfills legal requirements by identifying potential environmen-


Caltrans photo © Thomas Ritter

tal effects of the RTP Alternatives and identifying ways to mitigate the effects. Lastly, the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) is the critical implementation document that provides funding for all major transportation projects in the region for the next six years.

There are several other related planning activities initiated and managed outside of SCAG by partner agencies. Caltrans is responsible for developing and administering the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) and the State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP). These programs feed directly into SCAG's RTIP and form the basis of the baseline for the RTP. Furthermore, the RTIP is an integral part of the RTP and represents the first six years of the long-range plan. Caltrans is also responsible for developing and updating a statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan, which is a policy document called the California Transportation Plan (CTP). SCAG must consider and incorporate the CTP in the update of the RTP.

The CTCs are responsible for the development and administration of their respective countywide TIPs. Some also choose to develop county-specific long-range transportation plans even though they are not legally required to do so. SCAG must consider and coordinate such activities of the CTCs in developing and updating the RTP.

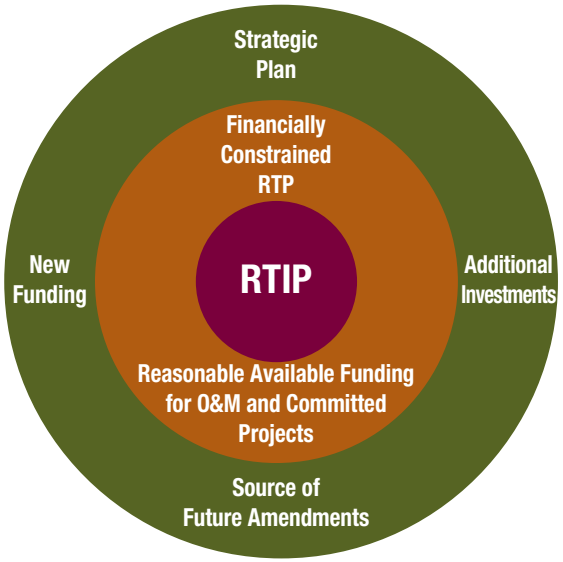
Local governments, including city and county governments, are responsible for preparing, updating and administering their local General Plans. Existing General Plans serve as input to the growth forecast work, and the adopted RTP, in turn, should influence future updates of the General Plans.

Finally, local air districts are responsible for developing Air Quality Management Plans (AQMP) for their respective air districts, which feed into the State Implementation Plan (SIP) and establish allowable emission budgets for criteria pollutants. The RTP serves as the input to the development of the AQMPs and the emission budgets identified by the SIP through this process, in turn, establish the thresholds with which subsequent conformity analyses must comply.

RTP Framework

Federal planning and conformity rules require that a conforming RTP be financially constrained. It must demonstrate that all projects identified in the constrained plan have adequate funding. A conforming RTP cannot simply be a wish list of projects. If we were to rely on existing funding sources, the fiscal reality is that our region would not have enough money to fund all of our transportation needs. Figure 1.3 depicts the funding framework for this RTP.

FIGURE 1.3 RTP FRAMEWORK



At the core of the plan is the RTIP, which not only represents the first six years of the plan, but also represents ongoing operations and maintenance commitments. Every project that seeks federal, state or local funding for implementation must be included in the RTIP. The first ring outside of the core, together with the core, represent the fiscally constrained plan that is used to demonstrate transportation conformity. These projects can be reasonably funded within the planning horizon of the RTP.

The outer ring, called the Strategic Plan, represents projects of merit that currently do not have sufficient funding or regional commitment. They should be considered for funding in the future as it becomes available. Projects typically flow from the outer ring to the core, as funding and commitments for these projects materialize and as they continue to meet the performance criteria established for the Plan.

Another way to look at the outer ring is to view projects in this domain as potential candidates for inclusion in the financially constrained RTP through future amendments. This helps streamline the RTP amendment process. However, given the time horizon of RTP and the dynamic environment in which transportation projects get funded and implemented, it is foreseeable that there are current projects outside our vision that may warrant inclusion in future RTP amendments. This framework is flexible enough to allow for amending projects into the RTP that are not in the Strategic Plan.

Overview of the Plan

First and foremost, this Plan puts forth a collective vision for the future of our regional transportation system. Our vision is based on a careful analysis of our transportation system, the future growth of our region, our mobility needs, air quality improvement needs, and our need to preserve the environment and mitigate harmful environmental impacts of the proposed transportation improvements.

The Plan carefully and deliberately articulates major challenges associated with our transportation system as well as achieving our vision. Key challenges addressed in the Plan include dramatic growth as well as changes in the characteristics of our demographics, the aging infrastructure, and the unprecedented demand on our goods movement system and our airports. The Plan also articulates our air quality and environmental challenges, and the constraints that they will place on our ability to make necessary improvements to our transportation system, particularly our goods movement infrastructure. On top of all of this, the region will continue to face serious funding shortfalls that will challenge our ability to simply keep our system afloat if we were to do nothing to improve our transportation funding situation.

Given our vision and the challenges, this Plan recognizes that our approach must be balanced, systematic, multimodal, and at the same time targeted to yield the best performance outcomes based on the established set of performance measures. Our integrated system investment approach is depicted by the Mobility Pyramid shown in Figure 3.3. According to this approach, our first priority is to invest in system monitoring and evaluation strategies so that decision makers can better understand how the system performs and make

well-informed decisions on how to fix our problems. Next, we must preserve our multimodal transportation system, which has cost the region hundreds of billions of dollars to build. The next strategy recognized in this hierarchy is the tremendous potential of coordinating and integrating land use choices with transportation investment decisions. Effective implementation would not only result in more efficient and effective utilization of available system capacity, but also in the preservation of our environment. We must also make sure that we are getting the most out of our available system by managing our system and our demand better. Such strategies are cost effective, easy to implement, and environmentally superior to the more capital intensive system expansion options. Having monitored and maintained our existing system, and having maximized system efficiency and system productivity through system management, land use coordination, and demand management, the Plan recognizes that targeted system expansion will still be needed to accommodate future growth. Therefore, the Plan proposes a balanced investment approach that would address all modes of transportation, including highways, the public transportation system, the goods movement system, non-motorized transportation, as well as airport ground access improvements.

Finally, while recognizing financial constraints, the Plan puts forth a suite of new and innovative funding strategies that are realistic, practical, and achievable within the time frame of the Plan. The Plan also recognizes that in spite of our best efforts, there simply will not be enough money to implement all of our transportation needs. The Plan includes a strategic component that identifies projects that cannot be funded at this point, but merit further consideration in future plan updates based on additional studies, funding support, and stakeholder consensus.